

Judicial Practices and Procedures
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A. Communications with the Judicial Office

- **Method of Communication:** All communications to the judicial office must be submitted by e-mail to the Court's Judicial Assistant at: tdavis@circuit7.org. The subject line must contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., 2025 102800 CFDB – State v. Smith - 2-Hour Suppression Hearing Requested).
- **Ex parte Communications:** All communications with the judicial office must comply with Canon 3 of the Code of Judicial Conduct, which prohibits a judge from initiating, permitting, or considering ex parte communications and from considering other communications outside the presence of the parties concerning a pending or impending proceeding, unless authorized by law. All parties must be copied on any e-mail directed

to the judicial office, unless an ex parte communication is authorized by law.

- **Unsolicited Communications:** Unsolicited communications from non-parties will not be considered by the court. Parties may only contact the judicial office in accordance with these practices and procedures.
- **Response to Inquiries:** The Court's Judicial Assistant is not authorized to provide legal advice. If the Court's Judicial Assistant is out of the office, you will receive an automated response to your email directing you how to proceed in her absence. Responses to e-mails will be given in the order in which the e-mails are received.

B. Scheduling Procedures

- **Court Schedule:** The Court uses a traditional criminal court calendar cycle, which includes regular arraignments, pretrial conferences, docket soundings, motion hearings, sentencing hearings and monthly jury trial weeks. Other hearings are scheduled on an as needed basis.
- **Scheduling Hearings:** Hearings must be requested by e-mail to the Court's Judicial Assistant at tdavis@circuit7.org. The subject line must contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., 2025 102800 CFDB – State v. Smith - 2-Hour Suppression Hearing Requested). All parties must be copied on any e-mail directed to the judicial office, unless an ex parte communication is authorized by law.
- **Notice of Hearing:** A notice of hearing must be filed and served by the party scheduling the hearing immediately after reserving hearing time. A notice of hearing must including the following minimum information: the case style including case number; the date, time, and location of the hearing; the matter(s) to be heard including docket number or filing date of each motion; the judge presiding over the hearing; and the amount of time reserved for the hearing. A notice of hearing involving any remote appearance must list the Zoom meeting information. All notices of hearing must contain the ADA notification required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.540.
- **Materials Submission Deadlines:** The Court must receive all materials for the hearing no later than three business days before the hearing.
- **Order of Proceedings:** Matters will be heard in the order they are scheduled to occur, or as otherwise determined by the Court. Parties represented by attorneys will generally be heard first. Matters in which the parties are appearing in person will generally be heard before matters

in which the parties are appearing by remote technology.

- **Continuance Procedure:** Continuances are disfavored and will be granted only upon a showing of good cause.
- **Cancelling Hearings:** Hearings noticed by the Court may only be cancelled by the Court. Hearings noticed by one or more parties may only be cancelled by the Court, the scheduling party, or by agreement of all parties involved in the hearing. You must cancel hearings by notifying the Judicial Assistant immediately. You must also immediately file and serve a notice of cancellation on opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.

C. Remote Appearance

- **Remote Appearance Procedure:** The court maintains a hybrid virtual courtroom, allowing parties to appear either in person or remotely, as provided by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.530. Requests to use communication technology for an appearance must be made by motion. Appearance via zoom will be granted for Non-evidentiary pre-trial conferences scheduled for 30 minutes or less.
- Proceedings for which in-person appearance is required for both counsel and defendant: Arraignments; Entry of a Plea; Evidentiary or non-evidentiary hearings on motions; Sentencing hearings; Docket Call; Jury Selection; Trial
- **Procedures prior to Zoom appearance:** Attorneys who request to appear via zoom must file a written motion with the clerk of court at least 24 hours prior to the court date and provide a courtesy copy to the Court by emailing tdavis@circuit7.org. The Motion must specify the date the attorney is requesting to appear via zoom and the type of proceeding that is scheduled on that date. Blanket motions requesting zoom appearance for all future pretrial conferences will be denied. Absent good cause, all motions to appear at non-evidentiary pretrial conferences will be granted.
- **On the day your hearing is scheduled:** On the date of the pretrial conference, attorneys who have been granted permission to appear via zoom shall be logged onto the court's zoom meeting room by 9:30 a.m. for morning pretrial conferences and 2:00 p.m. for afternoon pretrial conferences. When logging on, you must identify yourself by FULL NAME. Anyone logging on without fully identifying themselves by first and last name will not be granted access to the meeting room. Anyone logged on who did not file their motion at least 24 hours in advance will not be

permitted access to the meeting room. Counsel should be dressed appropriately as if they were appearing in the courtroom. Counsel must be stationary and cannot be driving an automobile while appearing via zoom. All devices should be set on mute until you hear your case called.

- When your case is called, unmute your device and speak loudly and clearly. Make certain there is no background noise that could distract the proceedings. When you have completed your business, please hang up or disconnect immediately. Do not record the proceedings while you are appearing via zoom.
- Failure to follow these instructions may result in future denials of requests to appear via zoom.
- IF USING THE ZOOM APP:
 - Go to the downloaded App x Go to Join a Meeting
 - Your meeting ID is: 904-827-5609
 - Type in your name to identify your phone number by name
 - Hit “join the meeting”
 - Enable Video and Audio
 - You should hear: “You are in the meeting”
 - Make certain your device is on mute. Do not speak until you hear your case called.
- IF USING A COMPUTER:
 - Go to <https://zoom.us/> x Go to Join a Meeting
 - Your meeting ID is: 904-827-5609
 - Enable Video and Audio if not automatically enabled
 - You should hear: “You are in the meeting”
 - Make certain your device is on mute. Do not speak until you hear your case called.

D. Submission of Orders and Judgments

Format: All proposed orders must be submitted in Word format by email to the Court's Judicial Assistant at tdavis@circuit7.org. The email must indicate whether all parties are in agreement as to the form of the order.

Deadline for Submissions: Proposed orders must be submitted within 5 days after any hearing.

Courtesy Copies of Case Law and Other Documents

- **When Required:** Courtesy copies of case law may be submitted to the court for any evidentiary proceeding.
- **Format:** PDF/a format or Word document is preferred, if submitted electronically.
- **Submission Method:** E-mail, U.S. mail, or hand delivery of courtesy copies is acceptable. If the submissions exceed 25 pages in total, paper copies must be submitted, and electronic copies are not permitted.
- **Deadline for Submissions:** Courtesy copies must be delivered to the court no later than three business days before any evidentiary proceeding.

E. Emergency and Other Urgent Matters

- **Requirements:** If a party believes there is a factual basis for setting an emergency hearing, a detailed motion setting forth the following must be filed: (1) the issues to be resolved, (2) the reasons why an emergency hearing is necessary, and (3) the amount of time needed for each party's presentation.
- **Scheduling:** If the court determines that an emergency exists, a hearing will be scheduled unilaterally by the court. All parties must make themselves available for the emergency hearing, barring exigent circumstances.

F. Exhibits for Evidentiary Proceedings

- **Submission Method:** All exhibits for evidentiary hearings or trial must be provided to the clerk in paper format in advance of the hearing or trial for marking. Trial exhibits must be submitted no later than three

business days before the hearing or trial. Marked exhibits will be assigned a letter for identification and will receive a numerical designation if admitted as evidence.

G. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences

- **Pretrial Conferences:** After arraignment, the Court will set monthly pretrial conferences until the case is set for trial.
- **Status Conferences:** Any party may request a status conference when a case requires. Parties represented by counsel are not required to appear at a status conference, unless otherwise ordered by the Court. If the court agrees that a status conference is required, the Court will schedule a status conference and provide the notice directly, or through the Clerk of Court.
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H. Setting Case for Trial

- **Procedure:** The Court will schedule cases for trial at the pretrial conference.
- **Notice Period:** After Docket Sounding, the Court will assign cases to specific days during the trial period and may assign back-up cases. Attorneys, parties, and witnesses are expected to be available during the entire trial period.
- **Other Procedures for Setting Case for Trial:** Transport orders must be provided timely. Extraditions require at least 10 days to transport an incarcerated person from other facilities or jurisdictions.

I. Forms

- Division forms are available by clicking on the links below:
 - [Plea form](#)
 - [Plea form \(Spanish\)](#)
 - [VOP Admission form](#)
 - [VOP Admission form \(Spanish\)](#)

J. Out of County Pleas

- **Procedure:** In order for a Defendant to enter a plea in a case pending in Flagler, Putnam, or Volusia counties, you must notify the Clerk's office at CriminalCourt@stjohnsclerk.com and the Court's Judicial Assistant at tdavis@circuit7.org at least 24 hours prior to the plea hearing. You **must include** in your email the county and case number, and you must attach the charging affidavit or the VOP affidavit.

K. Other Division Procedures

- **ADA Accommodations:** If you need an ADA accommodation, please contact Court Administration, 125 E. Orange Ave., Suite 300, Daytona Beach, FL 32114; (386) 257-6096.
- **Interpreter Requests:** If a spoken language court interpreter is needed for a hearing or trial, please [click here](#). For more information, please email interpreter@circuit7.org or call (386) 626-6566. If a sign language interpreter or accommodation is needed for a hearing or trial, please contact Court Administration at 125 E. Orange Ave., Suite 300, Daytona Beach, FL 32114; (386) 257-6096; SignLanguageRequests@circuit7.org